

EUGENE OREGON DAILY EMERALD (OR)

24 May 1985

Affirmative action compliance ruling approved for EMU

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Of the Emerald

The EMU Board voted unanimously Thursday night to require groups making use of EMU "privileges" to display their compliance with affirmative action.

If University President Paul Olum approves, all groups using EMU peg boards, lobby tables, and office space will be required to post their position on affirmative action, including the practice of equal rights without regard to sexual orientation.

The board also repealed a previously-proposed affirmative action policy that would restrict the use of the EMU to groups that comply with the EMU's affirmative action practices. That proposal would have directly affected military and CIA recruiters, both of which have come under fire by University students this year. The exclusion policy would not affect student groups, however, because students pay fees to use the EMU.

Arguing that the EMU is the center of student activity, Olum told the board earlier that he

would veto the exclusion policy if it passed.

The new display proposal stemmed from an alternative direction Olum recommended to the board, said Mark Nalia, EMU chair. The actual plan, however, was implemented by members of the board, he said.

"The intent is to display recruiters' non-compliance with the policy, to foster debate and controversy," Nalia said. "The bottom line is that we will take a stance on affirmative action."

Nalia said several board members felt the issue was simply to get the military recruiters off campus. "They used their gay and lesbian rights accordingly," he said.

"The primary issue (of the proposal) is sexual orientation, because everything else is covered by law," Nalia said.

Nalia said that there are severe discrimination problems against gays and lesbians on campus.

"There's subtle discrimination throughout the system. Many are homophobic — they're not willing to admit that it is," he said.